ASPECTS REGARDING TOURISM IN "EFTIMIE MURGU", CARAŞ-SEVERIN COUNTY

ASPECTE PRIVIND TURISMUL ÎN LOCALITATEA EFTIMIE MURGU, JUDEŢUL CARAŞ-SEVERIN

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Abstract: *The natural and the anthropic resources form the tourist sights of an area or a place. The villages in the Banat region still maintain the traditions, customs, folklore, crafts, and that is why the development of tourism is possible in such places.*
Eftimie Murgu in the Caras-Severin County can be included in the national and international tourist circuit through its diversity and uniqueness of tourist resources.

Key words: *tourist resources, agro tourism, mills.*

INTRODUCTION

In time, the development of tourism led to the increase of the tourist circulation at international level, the agglomeration of destinations and the appearance of pollution. These facts lead to the desire of rediscovering nature and a simpler, stress free and healthier way of life.

Rural tourism supposes hospitality from the local population and respect for the rural environment from the tourists.

This type of tourism has become a preference for a growing number of tourists due to its closeness to the nature, the local population, and the diversity of the tourist offer.

We believe that maintaining the tourist resources in the rural environment unaltered and the intention to include them in the offers of the tourist agencies can make up the objectives of this paper.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As the name calls it, rural tourism takes place in the rural environment and has as basic elements the environment and the local communities. For this type of tourism, the structures with accommodation functions are: tourist pensions, motels, camping sites, school camps, art camp, ecologic camps, and holiday villages.

If we take into consideration the geographic aspect, rural tourism takes place in the rural environment without being constraint by the existent physio-geographic and demographic characteristics.

All rural areas are characterized by:

- the reduced density of the population and households characteristics;
- the use of land and the proportion between agriculture and forestry;
- the social traditional organization and aspects of the community and heritage identity;

Rural tourism wants the valorisation or the rural space, the active involvement of the population of the area, the maintenance of crafts, activities and specific traditions, the respect for the cultural and natural heritage, in other words, the maintenance of rurality.

If we refer strictly to the advantages produced by rural tourism, we would say that:

- it is a way of supporting the development of rural communities;
- it avoids the depopulation of villages;
- it is a complementary activity of agriculture.

The most frequent forms of rural tourism are:

- agro tourism – valorises the accommodation excess in the peasant household and offers services related to serving meals, participating to feasts and traditional events, initiation in agriculture, knowing the surroundings, history, folk art;
- cultural – knowing the artistic and cultural heritage;
- leisure – landscaping;

- curative – health caring due to the favourable climate conditions, the existence of therapeutical waters, the application of natural remedies;
- sportive – recreational fishing, cyclotourism, equitation, speleotourism, climbing;
- vinicultural – visiting winegrowing areas and tasting wines, essential elements of the vinicultural tourism are the village and the wine;
- religious – visiting religious places and pilgrimages.

Their diversity highlights the fact that the rural environment offers unexpected tourist resources.

The encouragement of the development of rural tourism in the European Union is made through various projects and funds intended for this activity since tourism is considered a strategic sector.

Thus, the European Committee initiated in 1992 several projects under the generic name of „Ecotourism-culture and rurality" that targets the following fields:

- the ecologic tourism for youth;
- the tourist resources management;
- the protected areas;
- the cultural, folkloric and historic itineraries;
- the creation of a transnational data base for rural tourism;
- the elaboration of publications;
- the integrated research and development of rural tourism.

From the funds constituted for rural development we mention TRDI (Temporary Rural Development Instrument), SAPARD, EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development).

Within the EAFRD, the financing instrument that intends to support the member states in the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy, there is measure 313 "Encouraging tourist activities" which falls within Axis III – "Improving the quality of life in rural areas and diversifying rural economy".

This measure has as objectives:

- the creation and maintenance of jobs through tourism activities;
- the increase of the added value in tourism activities;

- the creation, improvement and diversification of tourist infrastructure and services;
- the increase of the tourist number and of the visit duration.

Romania, as a member state of the EU, benefits from the funds allotted to the development of rural tourism. In Romania, the tourist village can be[13]:

- ethno-folkloric;
- artistic and handmade creation;
- climate and landscape;
- vinicultural - fruit growing;
- pastoral;
- for sports.

As we can notice, these contribute to the development of a specific type of tourism in the Romanian rural space.

At European level, people appreciate the products that are handmade, the craft traditions, the costumes, the folklore, the village architecture, and the traditional occupations specific to the area.

The Romanian rural environment, that still preserves the authenticity of the traditions and crafts, offers the possibility of various tourist activities.

Within the cultural rural tourism we can include the visit to some historic heritage sights, museums, memorial houses, ateliers of popular crafts, the participation in cultural events like fairs, prayers (‚nedeie'), and traditional celebrations.

A cultural and scientific attraction would also be the participation in the archaic production processes, such as grinding cereals in ancient mills. We can state that the history of the processing of cereal grains is confounded with human history and its material culture.

Rudimentary or competitive, the cereal mills have been in the Romanian rural space for ever.

In the history of mills we can include the bruising mills, grinders, crushers, water and wind mills, cracker mills.

[13] ALECU, I.N., CONSTANTIN, M., 2006, Agro tourism and agro tourist marketing, Ed. Ceres, Bucharest, , pp.162-164.

The water mills have been a mundane presence in the country, some of them being functional even today.

These water mills can have a vertical or a horizontal wheel. In the first case, the setting in motion is done from the axis of the hydraulic wheel, through the help of some toothed wooden wheels, the movement is transmitted to the axis of the mobile rock of the grinder. At the mill with horizontal wheel, the water is directed towards the turbine through an open chamfer or a closed pipe, the axis of the wheel sets the mobile grinder wheel in motion.

Due to their picturesque, the legends around them, the technic of producing cereals, the water mills will always attract people.

The development of tourism in a Romanian rural space that has such constructions and technologies would be beneficial for the local community, but also for the potential tourists.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Situated in the Almăjului Depression, in the south-western part of the Caraş Severin County, in the south-west of Romania, known until 1970 as Rudăria, Eftimie Murgu has a total area of 9902 ha, of which only 72,6 ha (7,33% of the total area) form the land of the village, the rest being forests, meadows, pastures and arable land, and is crossed by the Rudărica river.

The access way is only by road, known as DJ 571F, starting from Bozovici, the distance between Bozovici and Eftimie Murgu being of 6,4 km.

Here live 1939 persons in 551 households.

We would mention here the following natural tourist resources:

- Rudăricii gorges;
- Adam and Eve peaks;
- the continental temperate climate with Mediterranean influences;
- the rich vegetation with beech forests and lilac bushes;
- the fauna adapted to the relief and vegetation (the horned viper, squirrel, wild boar, wolf, deer, brown bear, trout, woodpecker and owl).

The anthropic resources of the village are:

- the water mills with horizontal wheel;
- the museum within the school;

- the historic vestiges discovered here (fragments of red and black ceramics belonging to the Coţofeni culture, a stone hammer, ceramic fragments belonging to the northern Thracs, a silver Roman dinar issued by Vespasian Emperor);
- the traditional costume;
- the customs and traditions (the "nedeie", "Cornilor Monday", the Lilac Feast);
- the legends related to the mills.

The main attraction for the tourists that reach this place is the ensemble formed of the 22 water mills spread along the river on a 3km distance, 9 in the village and 13 outside the village.

These mills seem to come from our childhood's fairy tales. They are wooden constructions, small, having a simple Dacian mechanism to grind cereals. The mechanism is simple with horizontal wheel, the water flows through an open chamfer. The mill rocks come from Dubova, Mehedinţi County.

The mills, restored between September 2000 and February 2001 with European funds – Euroart programme with the help of the National Museum Complex Sibiu, are included in the national patrimony.

The local people can grind between 130 and 140 kg of cereals in 24 hours, the mills being owned by a group of 15-25 grooms (association system).

Their names can be considered strange being inspired from the names of the ancient families that built these mills or from various toponyms. Thus we have the Mill at the Tunnel, Roşonea,Viloanea, Trăiloanea, Îndărătnica din MIjloc, Îndărătnica de la Perete, Băţolea, Pătoanea, Firiz, Prundulea, Popeasca, Vamulea, Hămbăroanea, Firizoanea, Maxinoanea, Micloşoanea, Lăiaţa, Bruşoanea, Vlăgioanea, Băniana, Moara de la Podul Ilochii şi Moara din Ţarina. The mills reservation Rudăria is the biggest one in Eastern Europe.

The strong points of Eftimie Murgu are:

- the diversity of the natural tourist resources;
- the wild areas, unaffected by the human intervention;
- the mills reservations known at international level;
- the authentic customs and traditions;

- the legal frame that allows the development of protected areas network and their preservation.

Besides these strengths, we can also enumerate the existent opportunities:

- the increase of the number of tourists/visitors that have as motivation the knowledge of rural culture;
- the possibility to attract European structural funds;
- multiple ways of promoting the tourist resources.

The weak points identified are:

- the inexistence of a tourist accommodation structure;
- the absence of public food units;
- the inexistence of a local tourist guide;
- tourism is not perceived as a supplementary financial source;
- the lack of sewerage networks with plants for the purification of used waters.

Here we can add the following threats:

- the reservation is crossed by the forest road;
- the flooding resulted after the melting of snow and the rains that overlap;
- the urbanization of the rural population and the loss of the existent immaterial/material cultural heritage;
- the storage of waste.

Unfortunately, the inexistence of a technical-material basis specific to tourism and not perceiving of tourism as a supplementary financial source by the local people, the lack of involvement of local authorities keep tourism in this place from development.

CONCLUSIONS

Through its types and forms, rural tourism attracts more and more tourists. The authenticity of the villages, the quiet and the connection between humans and nature are elements that weigh in choosing a holiday destination. Thus, rural tourism can be the engine of development.

The EU supports rural development, including tourism through projects and allotment of funds.

In Romania, rural tourism has developed after 1990. The rural cultural tourism focuses on the knowledge of the artistic and cultural heritage. Thus, rural tourism can be the engine of development and

promotion of local cultural identities, but also of economic and social development.

The inhabitants of Eftimie Murgu in the Caraş – Severin County have kept the traditions, customs and system of grinding cereals and can offer them to the tourists together with the beauty of the landscapes.

The mills reservation should be the main tourist sight and the brand of Eftimie Murgu. Currently, few people know about the existence of such ‚treasure', and the authorities and the tourist agencies haven't been too helpful in promoting it.

The resources presented above can be sufficient for the development of tourism in this picturesque village.

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